General Assembly

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Seventieth session
Agenda item 22 (*c*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 December 2015

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/70/474/Add.3)*]

70/214. Culture and sustainable development

The General Assembly,

Guided by the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling its resolutions 41/187 of 8 December 1986, 46/158 of 19 December 1991, 51/179 of 16 December 1996, 52/197 of 18 December 1997, 53/184 of 15 December 1998, 55/192 of 20 December 2000, 57/249 of 20 December 2002, 65/166 of 20 December 2010 and 66/208 of 22 December 2011, concerning culture and development, 66/288 of 27 July 2012, entitled "The future we want", and 68/223 of 20 December 2013 and 69/230 of 19 December 2014 on culture and sustainable development,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling that, in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, inter alia, the natural and cultural diversity of the world is acknowledged and it is recognized that cultures and civilizations can contribute to, and are crucial enablers of, sustainable development,

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Recalling also the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions,[1] as well as other international conventions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization that acknowledge cultural diversity and economic and social development,[2]

Recognizing that culture is an essential component of human development, that it represents a source of identity, innovation and creativity for the individual and the community and that it is an important factor in social inclusion and poverty eradication, providing for sustainable economic growth and ownership of development processes,

Recognizing also the importance of respect and understanding for cultural diversity throughout the world and of working together and not against each other and of fostering intercultural understanding and dialogue, mutual listening and learning and an ethic of global citizenship and solidarity,

Recalling the principles of the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization,[3] and acknowledging that cultural diversity is a source of enrichment for humankind and an important contribution to the sustainable development of local communities, peoples and nations, empowering them to play an active and unique role in development initiatives,

Recognizing the importance of multilingualism as a means of promoting, protecting and preserving the diversity of languages and cultures globally and that genuine multilingualism promotes unity in diversity and international understanding, and recognizing also the importance for the peoples of the world to communicate in their own language,

Recalling the concerns expressed in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[4] on the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions in the area of culture, which has prevented women from having a significant impact in the area of culture and development,

Recalling also the importance of the promotion of national cultures, artistic creation in all its forms and international and regional cultural cooperation, and reaffirming in this regard the relevance of strengthening national efforts and regional and international cooperation mechanisms for cultural action and artistic creation and recognizing respect for cultural pluralism, as defined by the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, as policies for the inclusion and participation of all citizens that guarantee social cohesion and the vitality of civil society and peace, enhance cultural development and contribute to sustainable development,

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2440, No. 43977.

[2] The Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (1954); the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970); the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972); the Convention on the Protection of the Underwater Cultural Heritage (2001); and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003).

[3] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, *Records of the General Conference, Thirty-first Session, Paris, 15 October–3 November 2001*, vol. 1 and corrigendum, *Resolutions*, sect. V, resolution 25, annex I.

[4] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4–15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

Recognizing the linkages between cultural and biological diversity and the positive contribution of local and indigenous traditional knowledge in addressing environmental challenges in a sustainable manner,

Taking note of the declaration adopted in Florence, Italy, on 4 October 2014, at the third United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization World Forum on Culture and Cultural Industries, which follows the Hangzhou Declaration: Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Policies, adopted in Hangzhou, China, on 17 May 2013, and the Bali Promise, adopted at the World Culture Forum, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 24 to 27 November 2013, on the role that culture plays as a driver of sustainable development,

Stressing the importance of inclusiveness within the United Nations development system and that no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution,

1. *Reaffirms* the role of culture as an enabler of sustainable development that provides people and communities with a strong sense of identity and social cohesion and contributes to more effective and sustainable development policies and measures at all levels, and stresses in this regard that policies responsive to cultural contexts can yield better, sustainable, inclusive and equitable development outcomes;

2. *Recognizes* the potential of culture as a driver of sustainable development, which contributes to a strong and viable economic sector by generating income, creating decent jobs and addressing both the economic and social dimensions of poverty through cultural heritage and cultural and creative industries, while providing innovative and effective solutions to cross-cutting issues, such as education, health, gender equality and the environment;

3. *Emphasizes* the important contribution of culture to the three dimensions of sustainable development and to the achievement of national development objectives and the Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals, and in this regard acknowledges:

(*a*) That culture contributes to inclusive economic development, as cultural heritage, cultural and creative industries, sustainable cultural tourism and cultural infrastructure are sources of income generation and job creation, including at the community level, thus improving living conditions and fostering community-based economic growth, and contribute to empowering individuals;

(*b*) That culture contributes to inclusive social development for all, including local communities and indigenous peoples, with respect for cultural diversity, safeguarding of the cultural and natural heritage, fostering of cultural institutions and strengthening of cultural and creative industries;

(*c*) That culture contributes to environmental sustainability, since the protection of cultural and biological diversity and the natural heritage is crucial to sustainable development, while supporting traditional systems of environmental protection, and resource management can contribute to the increased sustainability of fragile ecosystems and the preservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, reducing land degradation and mitigating the effects of climate change;

4. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, to ensure that no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution;

5. *Reaffirms* that sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security and that peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development, and acknowledges that culture can contribute to sustainable development by constituting a valuable resource for empowering communities to participate fully in social and cultural life, facilitating inclusive governance and dialogue at the national, regional and international levels and contributing to conflict prevention and resolution, as well as to reconciliation and recovery;

6. *Recognizes* that culture should be taken into account in the promotion and implementation of new sustainable consumption and production patterns that contribute to the responsible use of resources and address the adverse impacts of climate change;

7. *Acknowledges* that quality education is enriched by culture, which transmits shared values, knowledge and skills;

8. *Welcomes* the inclusion in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of several targets reflecting the contribution of culture to sustainable development, recalls that the Sustainable Development Goals and targets are integrated and indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development, and in this regard looks forward to their achievement, building on the positive results and impact of programmes utilizing culture as an enabler of sustainable development;

9. *Decides* to give consideration, as appropriate, to the contribution of culture to sustainable development in the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

10. *Invites* all countries, intergovernmental bodies, organizations of the United Nations system, relevant non-governmental organizations and all other relevant stakeholders:

(*a*) To raise public awareness of the importance of cultural diversity for sustainable development, promoting its positive value through education and media tools;

(*b*) To ensure a more visible and effective integration and mainstreaming of culture into economic, social and environmental development policies and strategies at all levels;

(*c*) To ensure that women and men can equally access, participate in and contribute to cultural life and decision-making, and to further commit themselves to the development of cultural policies and programmes with a gender perspective at the local, national and international levels in order to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

(*d*) To promote capacity-building, where appropriate, at all levels for the development of a dynamic cultural and creative sector, in particular by encouraging creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship, supporting the development of cultural institutions and cultural industries, providing technical and vocational training for culture professionals and increasing employment opportunities in the cultural and creative sector for sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and development;

(*e*) To actively support the emergence of local markets for cultural goods and services and to facilitate the effective and licit access of such goods and services to international markets, taking into account the expanding range of cultural production and consumption and, for States parties to it, the provisions of the

Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions;[1]

(*f*) To preserve and maintain local and indigenous traditional knowledge and community practices of environmental management, which are valuable examples of culture as a vehicle for sustainable development, and to foster synergies between modern science and technology and local and indigenous knowledge, practices and innovation;

(*g*) To promote global awareness of the linkages between cultural and biological diversity, including through the protection and encouragement of the customary use of biological resources, in accordance with traditional cultural practices, as a key element of a comprehensive approach to sustainable development;

(*h*) To support national legal frameworks and policies for the protection and preservation of cultural heritage and cultural property,[5] encouraging initiatives to fight against illicit trafficking in cultural property and the return of cultural property, in accordance with national legislation and applicable international legal frameworks, including by promoting international cooperation to prevent the misappropriation of cultural heritage and products, recognizing the importance of intellectual property rights in sustaining those involved in cultural creativity;

(*i*) To note that, in achieving these objectives, innovative mechanisms of financing can make a positive contribution in assisting developing countries in mobilizing additional resources for development on a stable, predictable and voluntary basis, and to reiterate that such voluntary mechanisms should be effective, should aim to mobilize resources that are stable and predictable, should supplement and not be a substitute for traditional sources of financing, should be disbursed in accordance with the priorities of developing countries and should not unduly burden such countries;

(*j*) To mobilize culture as a vehicle to foster tolerance, mutual understanding, peace and reconciliation in the context of conflict-prevention, conflict-resolution and peacebuilding processes;

11. *Expresses deep concern* that cultural property, including religious sites and objects, is increasingly targeted by terrorist attacks, often resulting in its damage, theft or complete destruction, and condemns such attacks;

12. *Encourages* all countries, intergovernmental bodies, organizations of the United Nations system, relevant non-governmental organizations and all other relevant stakeholders to enhance international cooperation in supporting the efforts of developing countries towards the development, strengthening and consolidation of cultural industries, cultural tourism and culture-related microenterprises and to assist those countries in developing the necessary infrastructure and skills, as well as in mastering information and communications technologies and in gaining access to new technologies on mutually agreed terms;

13. *Encourages* initiatives to foster cultural cooperation agreements and networks at the regional level for knowledge- and information-sharing for sustainable development;

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[5] As defined in article 1 of the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 823, No. 11806).

14. *Invites* the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, to continue to provide support, to facilitate financing and to assist Member States, upon their request, in developing their national capacities to optimize the contribution of culture to sustainable development, including through information-sharing, the exchange of best practices, data collection, research and study and the use of appropriate evaluation indicators, as well as to implement applicable international cultural conventions, taking into account the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly;

15. *Invites* the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other relevant United Nations bodies to continue to assess, in consultation with Member States, the contribution of culture to the achievement of sustainable development through the compilation of quantitative data, including indicators and statistics, with a view to informing development policies and relevant reports, where appropriate;

16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that United Nations country teams continue to further integrate and mainstream culture into their programming exercises, in particular United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks, in consultation with relevant national authorities, when assisting countries in the pursuit of their development objectives;

17. *Encourages* all countries, intergovernmental bodies, organizations of the United Nations system, relevant non-governmental organizations and all other relevant stakeholders to give due consideration to the contribution of culture to the achievement of sustainable development in the formulation of national, regional and international development policies and international cooperation instruments;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include, under the item entitled "Globalization and interdependence", the sub-item entitled "Culture and sustainable development" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, unless otherwise agreed in the discussions on the revitalization of the Second Committee.

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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 22 December 2015

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/70/474/Add.4)*]

70/215. Development cooperation with middle-income countries

The General Assembly,

Recalling the outcomes of all the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social, environmental and related fields,

Reaffirming its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", in which it adopted a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Sustainable Development Goals and targets, its commitment to working tirelessly for the full implementation of this Agenda by 2030, its recognition that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, its commitment to achieving sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — in a balanced and integrated manner, and to building upon the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals and seeking to address their unfinished business,

Reaffirming also its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, supports and complements it, helps to contextualize its means of implementation targets with concrete policies and actions, and reaffirms the strong political commitment to address the challenge of financing and creating an enabling environment at all levels for sustainable development in the spirit of global partnership and solidarity,

Recalling that the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes, inter alia, that middle-income countries still face significant challenges to achieve sustainable development and that, in order to ensure that achievements made to date are sustained, efforts to address ongoing challenges should be strengthened through the exchange of experiences, improved coordination and better and focused support of the United Nations development system, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and other stakeholders,

Reaffirming its resolution 67/226 of 21 December 2012 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

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Recalling its resolutions 63/223 of 19 December 2008, 64/208 of 21 December 2009, 66/212 of 22 December 2011 and 68/222 of 20 December 2013,

Taking note of the outcomes of the international conferences on development cooperation with middle-income countries held in Madrid on 1 and 2 March 2007,[1] in San Salvador on 3 and 4 October 2007,[2] in Windhoek from 4 to 6 August 2008[3] and in San José from 12 to 14 June 2013,[4]

Noting the regional conferences on development cooperation with middle-income countries held in Cairo on 11 and 12 March 2008, in Minsk on 16 and 17 May 2013, in Amman on 23 May 2013 and in Minsk on 23 and 24 April 2015,

Emphasizing that cohesive, nationally owned sustainable development strategies, supported by integrated national financing frameworks, will be at the heart of efforts by Member States, reiterating that each country has primary responsibility for its own economic and social development and that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized, highlighting the need to respect each country's policy space and leadership in the implementation of policies for poverty eradication and sustainable development while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments, recognizing that national development efforts need to be supported by an enabling international economic environment, including coherent and mutually supporting world trade, monetary and financial systems and strengthened and enhanced global economic governance, and highlighting the fact that processes to develop and facilitate the availability of appropriate knowledge and technologies globally, as well as capacity-building, are also critical, including pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors and reinvigorating the global partnership for sustainable development,

Reaffirming that the fundamental characteristics of the operational activities for development of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, their neutrality and their multilateralism, as well as their ability to respond to the development needs of programme countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities are carried out for the benefit of programme countries, at their request and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development,

Emphasizing that there is no "one size fits all" approach to development and that development assistance by the United Nations development system should respond to the varying development needs of programme countries, including the development needs of middle-income countries, and should be aligned with their national development plans and strategies in accordance with its mandates, keeping in mind the needs of the least developed countries,

Noting that national averages based on criteria such as per capita income do not always reflect the actual particularities and development needs of middle-income countries and that, despite notable reductions in poverty, middle-income countries are still home to the majority of the world's people living in poverty and inequalities remain,

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[1] See A/62/71-E/2007/46, annex.

[2] See A/62/483-E/2007/90, annex.

[3] See A/C.2/63/3, annexes I and II.

[4] See A/C.2/68/5.

Recognizing that high degrees of inequality may contribute to vulnerability in middle-income countries and constrain sustainable development in many of those countries, and that economic growth needs to be sustained, inclusive and equitable,

Stressing that middle-income countries continue to face particular challenges related to, inter alia, job creation, the diversification and transformation of their economies and access to international markets and, in this regard, that efforts to create a national enabling environment for development should be complemented by a global enabling environment,

Recalling the resolve of Member States to enhance and strengthen domestic resource mobilization and fiscal space, including, where appropriate, through modernized tax systems, more efficient tax collection, the broadening of the tax base and the effective combating of tax evasion and capital flight, and reiterating that, while each country is responsible for its tax system, it is important to support national efforts in these areas by strengthening technical assistance and enhancing international cooperation and participation in addressing international tax matters,

Recognizing the need to better understand the multidimensional nature of development and poverty, and acknowledging the significant role that the United Nations system has played and should continue to play in this regard,

Reaffirming that achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development, and in that regard reiterating the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies,

Expressing concern about the adverse impact and consequences of the world financial and economic crisis, including on development, and evidence of an uneven, fragile and slow recovery, cognizant that the global economy, notwithstanding significant efforts that helped to contain tail risks, improve financial market conditions and stability and sustain recovery, still remains in a challenging phase, with downside risks, including high volatility in global markets, falling commodity prices, high unemployment, particularly among young people, unsustainable debt in some countries and widespread fiscal strains, which pose challenges for global economic recovery and reflect the need for additional progress towards sustaining and rebalancing global demand, and stressing the need for continuing efforts to address systemic fragilities and imbalances and to reform and strengthen the international financial system while implementing the reforms agreed upon to date,

Stressing the importance of inclusiveness within the United Nations development system and that no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[5]

2. *Acknowledges* the efforts made and successes achieved by many middle-income countries in eradicating poverty and achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as well as their significant contribution to global and regional development and economic stability;

[5] A/70/227.

3. *Also acknowledges* that identifying structural gaps can improve the understanding of development needs of developing countries, including middle-income countries;

4. *Expresses concern* that some middle-income countries are highly indebted and face increased challenges to their long-term debt sustainability;

5. *Welcomes* the solidarity of middle-income countries with other developing countries, in particular the financial, technical, technology transfer and capacity-building support being provided by middle-income countries, particularly to the least developed countries, through South-South and triangular cooperation, while stressing that South-South cooperation is a complement to, and not a substitute for, North-South cooperation, and in this regard calls upon the United Nations development system to continue its ongoing efforts to mainstream support to South-South cooperation and triangular cooperation;

6. *Requests* the United Nations development system to ensure that it addresses the diverse development needs of middle-income countries in a coordinated manner through, inter alia, an accurate assessment of the national priorities and needs of these countries, taking into account the use of variables that go beyond per capita income criteria;

7. *Stresses*, in that regard, that the quadrennial comprehensive policy review negotiations in 2016 should give due consideration to ways in which the United Nations development system could improve its support to different country contexts, including how to provide efficient, effective, better-focused and better-coordinated support to middle-income countries in order to strengthen their efforts to overcome the significant challenges that they face in achieving sustainable development, and invites the Economic and Social Council to discuss, inter alia, concrete proposals to this effect in the ongoing process of dialogues of the Council on the long-term positioning of the United Nations development system;

8. *Calls upon* developed countries and developing countries members of the World Trade Organization declaring themselves in a position to do so to realize the timely implementation of duty-free and quota-free market access on a lasting basis for all products originating from all the least developed countries, consistent with the decisions of the World Trade Organization, and also calls upon those countries to take steps to facilitate market access for products of the least developed countries, including by developing simple and transparent rules of origin applicable to imports from the least developed countries, in accordance with the guidelines adopted by the members of the World Trade Organization at its Ninth Ministerial Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 7 December 2013;

9. *Recognizes* the importance of the role of the private sector, as well as of the role of public-private partnerships, in meeting the challenges of sustainable development for middle-income countries and other developing countries;

10. *Also recognizes* that the creation, development and diffusion of innovations and new technologies and associated know-how, including the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, are powerful drivers of economic growth and sustainable development;

11. *Welcomes* the launch, by its resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development", of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, and looks forward to its expeditious operationalization;

12. *Recognizes* the great importance of providing trade-related capacity-building for developing countries, including African countries, the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries, including for the promotion of regional economic integration and interconnectivity;

13. *Acknowledges* that good governance and the rule of law at the national and international levels are essential for sustained economic growth, sustainable development and the eradication of poverty and hunger;

14. *Recognizes* that middle-income countries still face significant challenges in achieving sustainable development and that, in order to ensure that achievements made to date are sustained, efforts to address ongoing challenges should be strengthened through the exchange of experiences, improved coordination and better and focused support of the United Nations development system, the international financial institutions, regional organizations and other stakeholders, requests those stakeholders to ensure that the diverse and specific development needs of middle-income countries are appropriately considered and addressed, in a tailored fashion, in their relevant strategies and policies, with a view to promoting a coherent and comprehensive approach towards individual countries, and acknowledges that official development assistance and other forms of concessional financing are still important for a number of these countries and have a role to play in achieving targeted results, taking into account the specific needs of these countries;

15. *Encourages* shareholders in multilateral development banks to develop graduation policies that are sequenced, phased and gradual and to explore ways to ensure that their assistance best addresses the opportunities and challenges presented by the diverse circumstances of middle-income countries;

16. *Recognizes* that Governments will have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review at the national, regional and global levels in relation to the progress made in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and targets and that quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data will be needed to help with the measurement of progress and to ensure that no one is left behind, and in this regard reiterates the commitment to intensify efforts to strengthen statistical capacities in developing countries, including middle-income countries;

17. *Recalls* paragraph 11 of its resolution 67/290 of 9 July 2013, and stresses that the concerns and specific challenges of middle-income countries should be given consideration, as appropriate, in the follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

18. *Calls upon* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates and resources, to ensure that no country is left behind in the implementation of the present resolution;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and decides to include, under the item entitled "Globalization and interdependence", the sub-item entitled "Development cooperation with middle-income countries" in the provisional agenda of its seventy-second session, unless otherwise agreed in the discussions on the revitalization of the Second Committee.

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